

See how your school district was graded on the latest bus inspection report



ST. LOUIS — The annual school bus inspection results are in from the Missouri State Highway Patrol and the grades are favorable for most St. Louis area districts.

Each year MSHP is tasked with inspecting every school bus in the state. The buses are placed into three categories: approved, defective and out of service.

bus that gets approved is one that passes with no issues.

MSHP said a bus that falls into the defective category means there's an issue, but it doesn't pose an immediate danger. Students can still ride on that bus as long as the issue is fixed within 10 days of the initial inspection. The bus will need to be re-inspected once the defect is fixed.

According to the highway patrol, a bus is taken out of service when there's an issue that "constitutes an immediate danger." The bus can't return to service until the problem is fixed and re-inspected by MSHP.

The report released Tuesday gives an approval rating for nearly 100 public and private schools in MSHP's Troop C, which is the St. Louis region.

There are 11 districts in Troop C that have a fleet of at least 100 buses. All the large schools earned an approval rating of 90% or above. Eight of the schools had zero buses taken out of service: Fox C-6, Francis Howell, Ft. Zumwalt, Hazelwood, Mehlville, Parkway, Rockwood, Saint Louis Public Schools, St. Louis County Special School District, Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation (VICC) and Wentzville.

Three districts in Troop C with at least 10 buses in its fleet failed to earn at least an 80% approval rating: Bowling Green, Lonedell and Ritenour. The majority of the issues fell under the "defective" category, which could mean only a minor repair is needed.

5 On Your Side has been following the annual bus inspection results for years. In the past, the results have prompted districts to take action to improve its fleet. After receiving an approval rating of 21% in 2014, [Rockwood made significant improvements](#) and decided to buy and maintain its own fleet instead of contracting its bus service with First Student. Rockwood has received high marks for the past several years including a 98% approval rating this year.

Check the full list of inspection results to see how your school district's buses were graded on the [Missouri State Highway Patrol's website here](#).

<https://www.ksdk.com/article/news/education/missouri-school-bus-safety-inspection-report/63-69d8b5e5-a050-49b0-aafd-e6c8f1f6623a>

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A recent workshop put on by University of Oklahoma instructors about anti-racism raises a red flag about the state of free expression and potential indoctrination inside the classrooms of the states flagship university, a nonprofit organization focused on freedom in education says.

In a seminar entitled "Anti-Racist Rhetoric & Pedagogies," three faculty members presented slides on "systemic racism" and addressed promoting anti-racist environments in the classroom. They also spoke about how to "subvert white institutional defensiveness." But during the April 14th workshop, one of its presenters Kelli Pyron Alvarez also asserted that students in a Principles of English Composition course are often "emboldened to be racist—like overtly racist," she said.

Alvarez went on to explain that teachers should forbid their students from making statements that may be hurtful to others including "derogatory remarks, critiques, and hate speech of any kind" as well as the use of "white supremacist ideas or sources," unless, she clarified, they're used by "antiracist crusaders."

"The [Supreme Court](#) has actually upheld that hate speech, derogatory speech, any of the -isms do not apply in the classroom because they do not foster a productive learning environment. And so, as instructors, we can tell our students: 'No, you do not have the right to say that. Stop talking right now,'" she continued, likely referring to the Court's 1988 decision in [Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier](#), which held that schools can regulate speech, as long as the actions taken by administrators "are reasonably related to a legitimate pedagogical interest."



On June 23, the Supreme Court handed down their decision in the hugely important student speech case *Mahanoy Area School District v. B.L.* The Court ruled in the student’s favor, but declined to set a new standard or test for when schools can restrict off-campus speech.

The Student Press Law Center welcomes the strong support of free speech for students in today’s decision, and the recognition that schools are the “nurseries of democracy.” But we note that today’s decision underscores the hypocrisy of the court in carving out exceptions for the ability of student journalists to exercise those rights.

The *Mahanoy* opinion says “[S]chools have a strong interest in ensuring that future generations understand the workings in practice of the well-known aphorism, “I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.” But day-to-day, schools are relying heavily on another Supreme Court precedent [*Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier* (1988)] to do the opposite: they both disapprove of what student journalists may say, and also deny their right to say it.

We stand by the rights of student journalists to report and publish freely and hope that this decision will help to bolster the efforts of [New Voices](#) activists across the country to adopt state-based student press freedom legislation.

Poynter.



First Amendment attorneys secured a victory in the Supreme Court on Wednesday after an 8-1 majority ruled in favor of a Pennsylvania high school athlete who, upset after not making the varsity cheer and softball rosters, used F-bombs in a Snapchat story to criticize the school.

Though the *Mahanoy School District v. B.L.* decision ruled in favor of the student, who [posted the captioned photo](#) while off campus, legal experts noted that there are still holes left to fill in free speech cases concerning students and school districts.

“The message that you get basically, is they want to move cautiously — and they’re trying not to set down a bright-line rule that will decide a lot of cases because they understand a lot of different factors at work, and they want to leave lower courts some flexibility in deciding these kinds of cases in the future,” said Kermit Roosevelt III, a professor of law at the University of Pennsylvania.

The court was nearly unanimous in its decision, with the only dissent coming from conservative Justice Clarence Thomas. Thomas has been consistent for years on his stance that public school students have minimal Constitutional rights, Roosevelt said.

The off-campus nature of the student’s activity with no real link to the school was a determining factor in the case, the majority expressed. To Roosevelt, the overwhelming majority opinion might suggest that there’s growing concern on the court’s behalf for students’ free speech.

But day-to-day, Dean said, schools are relying heavily on precedent set in [Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier](#), a 1988 Supreme Court decision that determined a high school principal’s removal of a student newspaper’s articles did not violate students’ rights, to do the opposite: “They both disapprove of what student journalists may say, and also deny their right to say it.”

“This was a situation where the Supreme Court could’ve gone much further in eroding students’ free speech rights,” Dean said. “They took the opportunity to reaffirm the fact that students shouldn’t be treated as second-class citizens, especially when they’re off campus.”

“I think that this decision from the Supreme Court sets us up nicely for schools and school officials to be aware of the fact that any time they are trying to limit speech rights, when they’re not on campus, they’re going to have a pretty heavy burden to meet.”